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[WHOLE NO. XXXV.]

Reminiscences.

TITIAN AND GIORGIONE.

IN superintending the studies of my son in Italy, I copied some pictures of the old masters, most celebrated for the excellence of their coloring; at once to give him an example of industry and judicious selection, and to bring home *fac-similes* of works, the merits of which could never be understood by Americans through any verbal descriptions. It is conceded that the best method of understanding the merit of a fine painting is to look well into it, as mere literary amateurs have said; but it must not be denied that the best method of looking into a picture is to copy it, with well-directed skill and devotion of mind. Among the master-pieces which I copied, *con amore*, at Florence, was the celebrated one known as "*Titian's Flora*"—constantly in requisition by Artists who wish to learn the glowing splendor of Titian's style.

I mention it, from my "Notes on Italy," as a curious anecdote in the Arts, that "In the Gallery of the *Manfrini* Palace at Venice, there is the richest specimen of the glowing pencil of *Giorgione* I have ever seen. It represents himself, his son, and the head and neck of a female, said to be his wife, but which is instantly recognized as the *Flora* of Titian, presenting an enigma not easy to unravel; for the wife of *Giorgione* was not the Mistress of the Medici, nor could *Giorgione* have copied his wife from the *Flora* of Titian. The probability is that Titian, the pupil of *Giorgione*, justly admiring this head of *Giorgione's* wife, adopted it, not only for his *Flora*, but also for the figure improperly called the Mistress of Francis the First, in the National Gallery at Paris," and on other occasions. They all have the same turn of the head; the same wavy golden locks, so difficult to imitate; and the same luminous sunny aspect of color—with some slight variations of hair—as if Titian knew he never could surpass it; but the drapery and figure varied, to suit the purpose for which he appropriated it.

Prior to this, in my visits to the Napoleon Gallery in Paris, I could not but admire the fine coloring of a Female head, which I was so certain was from the hand of *Giorgione*, that I did not consult my catalogue, where I afterwards found it recorded as the "*Fornarina*, by *Raphael*." It was afterwards restored to Florence, and when I saw it there, more conveniently near in the Tribune, I was further satisfied that it was *not* by *Raphael*. By injudicious cleaning in France, the face had lost much of the *Giorgione* glow, and, exhibited to my eye no attractions that ought to have fascinated such a man as *Raphael*, as did the real *Fornarina* of the *Madonna della Seggiola*. Having frankly expressed my opinion to the English Historical Landscape Painter, Mr. Wallis, who had resided forty years in Italy; he was amused with my decision, and said he would introduce me to an artist who knew something about the picture. This artist was a Mr. Smith, of New York, who, sixty years before this time, came to

study painting in Florence, acquiring but little reputation. He had offended his relations by thus neglecting commerce, for the unprofitable Arts. It came to his ears that a similar name to his, in an European paper, connected with some disgraceful end, was mistaken for his, and that it was exactly what they expected of him. He was so much offended, that he declared his determination to let none of them enjoy his wealth, and he never returned to America, but lived obscurely in the vicinity of Florence. One evening he entered the coffee-room he frequented, and Mr. Wallis introduced me, speaking loudly into Mr. Smith's deaf ear, that I wanted to learn from him something of the *Fornarina* of the Tribune. "Ah!" said the old gentleman of ninety years, "I know all about that. When I first came to Florence, about sixty years ago (this was in 1830), that Picture was in the Pitti Palace, in the catalogue set down as the Portrait of a Lady by *Giorgione*, but I told the Chevalier Custodian of the Gallery, who was then making out a new catalogue, and he was very glad to correct it, that it was the *Fornarina* by *Raphael*, by which title it has ever since been more honorably known." I could not help feeling glad that no one had given me a commission to copy this Picture, especially as it retained none of the merit of *Giorgione's* coloring, except in the hand that *grasped* the drapery with masculine vigor, and not with the grace of *Raphael*. I am so much astonished to read in Books of Travel, the extravagant praise bestowed on this Picture, that it makes me *shrink* into the self-enjoyment of my Art, and unwilling to deprive these poetical amateurs the gratification and fame they seek by their boundless and misplaced enthusiasm.

Rembrandt Plate.

SKETCHES OF INDIA.

I.

LANDING. AT MADRAS.—JUGGLERS.

A low range of sandy hills borders the Coromandel coast, to the south of the City of Madras. After a hundred days at sea the sight of any land would be delightful, but there was a peculiar charm in this, for on the crests and sides of these hills stood long lines of palm trees, like the columns of the gateway through which the magic chambers of the East were to be entered. Dreams were coming true.

At last the city came into sight, its flat-roofed houses stretching along the edge of the sea. The stout batteries and green esplanade of Fort St. George contrast with the mud-walled native huts, while the flag-staff and two or three church spires rise higher than the dark and heavy peak of the slender pagoda, that stands half hidden behind thick-set trees. The sea rolls up in front of the fort and of the town with unbroken force, for Madras lies exposed to the full swell of the Bay of Bengal, and has no harbor or shelter of any kind for the ships that come to anchor in its roadstead. The surf even in the calmest weather runs very high, but the boats and boatmen are

made for it—and nothing is more characteristic of the city than the catamarans and mussoolah boats. A catamaran is only three logs of light wood six or eight feet long, the middle one a little longer than the others, tied together with a rope made from the cocoa-nut fibre. On these logs one or two men will paddle themselves out over the roughest surf, sometimes crouching, sometimes standing, seeming often, as the water covers their little raft, to be moving without support upon the top of the waves. They often venture into a sea in which no other boat could live, conveying messages from shore to the ships, and carrying in their pointed, tight fitting caps, the letters which, after a long voyage, one longs for even more than for land.

The Mussoolah boats are large and long, with planks sewed together, and the seams stuffed with fibre, so that they yield and bend to the force of the waves. You take your seat at the stern on a high bench, over which is stretched an awning to keep off the sun. Behind you stands the helmsman, using a long oar as a rudder; facing you are twelve black skinny boatmen, spotted with white stains of salt which the spray has cast upon them, keeping time with long paddles to a shrill chant, in the pauses of which they beg for bucksheesh. As the boat draws near the shore, you hear the roar of the surf growing louder and louder, and you see the curling backs of the waves. The helmsman begins to shout, and beats time with his feet; a great wave is coming on fast—he shouts with all the strength of his voice, the men pull with a back stroke, the boat is brought round with her side to the approaching wave, all the men shout together, the wave lifts her on its broad shoulders, bearing her toward the shore, and then, slipping from under her, leaves the men pulling and straining at the oars to keep the reflux from sweeping her back. Another wave bears her further in, and a third lands her on the beach.

The boatmen spring out, two of them carry you in their arms up to the dry sand. They set you down, and your foot touches India. That day you spend in Aladdin's palace.

* * * * *

One morning after I had passed some days at Madras, I went to the "garden-house" of one of my English friends, to see an exhibition by some jugglers who had been sent for the night before to come up from the Black Town. The jugglers of Madras are famous as the best in India. They form a caste by themselves. Their skill is the result of the practise of successive generations, and their art is an hereditary one. It was about six o'clock in a clear September morning, and our party consisted of five or six spectators. Coffee having been served, we took our seats on the verandah on the shady side of the house, while the jugglers, of whom there were fifteen or twenty, men, women, and children, ranged themselves before us on the grass at the further side of the avenue, ten or twelve feet wide, that ran between us and them. Behind them was a green field, on which at some distance grew a